

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

*Fourth Series*

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 787.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1879.

PRICE 1½d.

## SCAMPING.

SOME years ago we were in want of a house, and purchased one that was just newly built, and seemingly in excellent condition, besides being commodious as a dwelling according to modern notions. The price was two thousand four hundred pounds, which was thought to be cheap for such a mansion. Like some other houses in the row, it had been erected on speculation by a builder. He was a decent, meek-looking man of advanced age, with a good reputation, and no one could have supposed him to be guilty of cheating. Whatever he was, it is proper to put people on their guard, by relating what was the upshot of the purchase we had made.

This house of ours, which with painting and one thing and another, did not cost less than three thousand pounds, turned out to be a sham. Everything to the eye looked well enough. The apartments were elegant, the lobbies and staircase spacious, the sunk floor for the domestics all that could be desired. We are settled down, and things go on very well for a time. At length suspicions begin to be entertained that all is not right. There is a screw loose somewhere, or rather a great many screws. The first indication of this unpleasant state of matters was a smell where no smell ought to be. Then, several more smells were discovered, all of them too significant of the fact that there was something seriously wrong. A search for the source and cause of the smells was made by an expert in the profession of house-building, who was said to be clever at hunting out and curing bad smells. Well, the investigation takes place.

It was interesting to observe the way in which the expert made his diagnosis of the ailment under which the house seemingly laboured. Like a hound trying to get on the scent of game, he sniffed about in all directions, and applied his nose along the walls and skirting-boards, until he fixed on the spots whence issued the malarious odours. These spots were opened up, skirting-boards were removed, and floors lifted. What hideous circumstances were revealed! The princ-

pal soil-pipes running underneath a passage were broken, from having been laid on soft earth, that had sunk; with the result that the sewage, instead of getting away, had poured into the foundations of the house, causing a filthy quagmire. A metal soil-pipe coming down an interior wall was cracked, in consequence of a bend having been roughly made, fumes from the crack escaping into a bedroom. As if to aggravate these horrors, a gas-pipe beneath the dining-room floor had been so imperfectly jointed that the gas found its way upwards behind the lath-and-plaster partitions. To make a long story short, the whole pipe-system of the establishment was wrong. Pipes were placed where no pipes should have been, and all were imperfectly executed. It appeared as if cheapness had been alone consulted, and that the builder—honest man—wished only to get the house off his hands, no matter what might be the consequence. Besides the imperfect pipe-system, the floors were made of unseasoned wood, causing a shrinkage all over, with gaps between the deals. As a remedy, several floors had to be lifted, and relaid with some additional new portions. A general idea of the manner in which things had been scamped, may be gathered from the fact, that the expense to which we were put first and last by employing masons, joiners, and plumbers, to rectify bad work, amounted to upwards of three hundred pounds.

We have ventured on telling these experiences as a sample of what hundreds of individuals could say regarding houses put upon the market in a scandalously defective condition, but of which condition purchasers are wholly unaware. The introduction of pipes to supply fresh-water and gas, and to carry off sewage, has vastly altered the character of dwellings. A house no longer consists of only four walls and a roof, of which every one may judge. It comprehends a highly ingenious system of metal and stoneware tubes, concealed for the most part beneath floors and behind partitions, and almost as complicated as the machinery of a watch. A fine opportunity accordingly occurs for palming off houses with a scamped organisa-

tion of pipes, not only to the inconvenience, but the extreme danger of families inhabiting them. We would by no means aver that all builders are disposed to act the part of cheats. Amongst them there are honourable men who would disdain to overreach employers or purchasers; but beyond question, as is seen by daily experience, there are many who from ignorance, indifference, or motives of avarice, offer houses for sale which in a sanitary point of view are uninhabitable.

To put the public on their guard concerning the fatal effects of improper house construction, a medical man acquainted with domestic sanitary defects has issued a work for popular instruction on the subject, 'Dangers to Health, by T. P. Teale, M.A.' (Churchill, London, 1878). Mr Teale, we understand, is surgeon to the General Infirmary at Leeds. His book is unique of its kind. It is not a dissertation, but a practical guide for the use of house-builders and householders. By means of coloured pictorial illustrations, imperfections in piping are readily shewn. The following are the more obvious errors pointed out. The water-closet is in the centre of the house instead of near an outside wall. The drain is under the floor of a room or beneath a passage. The soil-pipes emit gases which contaminate the water-cisterns, so that the water for drinking and washing is polluted to the danger of health. The vitiated air from badly jointed soil-pipes is seen flying in streams across the rooms, to escape by the fire-places, and poisoning people who are lying in their beds. More than a dozen plates illustrate the various mischiefs which are produced by neglecting to trap the soil-pipes. A trap consists of a double bend in a pipe to hold a certain quantity of water, through which the malignant gases cannot penetrate. Without a proper trap, these gases soar upwards through the whole house, as is at once signified by close and offensive smells. But traps are not enough. The principal soil-pipe should be ventilated by a separate pipe issuing into the open air at the top of the house. We need also to look to the jointing of soil-pipes. Will it be credited? In numerous instances, the different lengths of pipes are not jointed at all. The end of one length is simply, for the sake of cheapness, stuck into the adjoining length. Sometimes, to save appearances, the pipes are jointed with putty, whereas they should be securely soldered. It frequently happens that by these and other imperfections no mischief is apprehended until some one in the house is laid down by a smart attack of typhoid fever or diphtheria. The old saying used to be, 'Death in the pot.' It is now, 'Death in the pipe.' The paramount advice to every one is now, 'Look to your pipes.'

Nothing seems to be so susceptible of contamination as fresh milk. If there be any foul air in the house, the milk is sure to suffer. The stories told of diseases arising from the use of vitiated milk are endless. Usually, the vitiation is ascribed to adulteration with foul water, or to foul water having been drunk by the cows. Such doubtless has been the case sometimes; but it is now ascertained that the purest milk and cream are liable to be rendered unwholesome by the insidious attack of sewer-gases. When an untrapped soil-pipe or sewer has communication with a dairy containing open pans of milk, dreadful

havoc ensues. In 1875, an outbreak of fever at Croydon, long unaccountable, was traced to this cause. We quote the account of the affair from the *Times*. 'The Board of Health it is said has power under existing acts of parliament to inspect cow-sheds, but not dairies. Dr A. Carpenter stated to the Croydon Board of Health that he has known of a case in which fever of the typhoid kind was distributed in consequence of the dairy in which the milk was kept being in communication with the sewers of the district, and it unfortunately happened that the communication was not trapped. The milk was kept in the dairy and in the basement; and the trap being opened and certain arrangements carried on with carbolic acid, many of the customers of that milkman returned the milk because it smelt of tar. That told him at once the communication between the sewer and the dairy was open, and that the foul air was finding its way into the dairy and becoming absorbed by the milk, than which nothing in nature is so capable of absorbing sewer-gases. That dairy was the means of distributing typhoid germs, and yet the dairymen was innocent of mixing foul water with his milk.'

A common form of scamping occurs in the laying of pavements in the lower floors. Pavements ought in every instance to be laid on a thick bed of dry broken stones, bricks, or ashes, and to be jointed with strong cement. As the bringing of dry rubbish for this purpose would cause some expense, scamping is resorted to. The slabs of pavement are laid on the cold or it may be damp earth. The result is that in certain states of the atmosphere, the moisture condenses on the surface of the cold pavement, which assumes the appearance of being covered with water. In time, by constant wetting, the stone disintegrates, and requires to be renewed. We strongly counsel purchasers of houses to make sure that the pavements have been properly laid. Neglecting this, they may reckon on having a damp house. The same precaution should be used in laying passages with Portland cement. Unless the cement rests on a thick dry basis, it will disintegrate, and have an unsightly damp aspect.

In most instances in which an outbreak of diphtheria or typhoid takes place in a neighbourhood, blame is thrown upon architects for sanctioning the defective drainage of houses. Vast numbers of houses, however, are built and inhabited without consulting with architects, who have their own difficulties to contend with. In cases where they are employed, they wage a continual and provoking war with contractors in different departments of work. They give express injunctions for the execution of every detail, and frequently, if at all possible, such obligations are shirked. The foundations of the house are defective, the mortar for building is surcharged with street-scrapings, the timbers fall short of the requisite strength, the nails employed are of an inferior quality, the lead is not of the weight bargained for, the slates are not first-rate, the plastering of the rooms is so bad that if punctured by a nail, sand pours out in a stream, the floors are laid with unseasoned timber, and the oil-paint on the doors and window-sashes is composed of whiting, or some other cheap substitute for white-lead. There is scamping throughout. It is a common practice

to buy defective drain-tubes, which are sold at a cheap rate. These defective tubes, known as 'seconds,' are partly broken or cracked; sometimes they are misshapen, oval instead of round, or perhaps twisted. Anyway, they produce leakage with its attendant dangers to health.

Speculative builders in necessitous circumstances are known to resort to tricks beyond the use of scamped pipes. We have heard of an instance in which the gutters for rain-water on the top of a house were composed of nothing more than pitched brown paper instead of lead. The rascal who was guilty of this piece of scamping wanted to borrow money on the property. Worse than this has been reported to us. A person in the neighbourhood of London who was in the habit of building houses and of effecting mortgages on them as soon as erected, was on one occasion so hard run for money, that in order to finish a lot of houses and get them occupied, he took away the locks, grates, and chimney-pieces of the houses already mortgaged. This was of course nothing but theft; but the mortgagee of the houses that were plundered would not incur the trouble and expense of prosecuting the depredator. Many such stories could be related.

Looked at comprehensively, scamping appropriately ranks with the adulteration of food, and those villainous financial frauds that are the disgrace of our times. In almost every branch of manufacture, scamping is developed without shame, and likely enough without remorse. Houses are scamped, ships are scamped, even some of the works in railway construction are scamped. People wear scamped clothing, eat scamped food, drink water that is polluted by scamped work. Cheated on all hands from the cradle to the grave; the cheating very frequently being committed by men who aspire to keep a fair face to the world, and to signalise themselves by a parade of religious profession! Besides the downright dishonesty with which we are so apt to be assailed, one needs to be constantly on his guard against a spirit of trifling and indifference. Jobs of all sorts are performed in a style of easy carelessness. Earnestness in professional pursuits is rather looked down upon than otherwise. Under the auspices of inconsiderate philanthropists, the idling of time is exalted to a kind of virtue, as if the greatness of England depended on every man and woman doing as little serious work as they possibly could. The want of earnest care to do a thing well, would occasionally be amusing if it were not dangerous. A smell of gas in a room is sometimes traced to the fact of a nail having been driven into a gas-pipe. A house goes on fire in consequence of a beam of wood being projected into a flue. Other instances of carelessness will occur to recollection.

Numerous and exceedingly commendable are now the efforts made to diffuse technical knowledge in the useful arts. Large sums are expended by government for the purpose. There are popular lectures without end on the subject. Apparently it is all up-hill work. In our opinion, unskillfulness is less to be complained of than the want of honesty. If any good is to be done, there must be a more prevalent conscientiousness—a little more sense of honour and moral obligation, and, shall we add, a stronger determination to work than to spend time in listless and positively

mischievous 'recreation.' Let scamping in every branch of workmanship receive not only public reprobation, but the punishment justly due—as the fashionable phrase goes—to 'falsehood, fraud, and wilful imposition.'

The scamping of house-construction, of which we have presented some illustrations, will need some special check. Existing arrangements are in a great measure illusory. As is well known, there are local sanitary authorities, whose duty it is to inspect and certify dwellings previous to their occupation; but from whatever cause, the duties of these dignitaries are not performed with the searching rigour which public safety calls for. In this respect, therefore, we would have the law amended, by introducing the action of a central authority, without whose licence no plans should be sanctioned, or dwellings occupied. At the same time, let it be explicitly understood that no legislation however stern can exempt people from looking after their own affairs. It is incumbent on every householder to make himself acquainted with the varieties of imperfection to which the mechanical appliances of his dwelling are liable; and if he does not, he knows where at least a share of the blame should rest. w. c.

## YOUNG LORD PENRITH.

## CHAPTER V.—AT LLOSTHUEL COURT.

THOSE crags of granite, reddish here, bluish there in the shade, but which the sun's first gleam turns to glowing crimson and sparkling azure, have a character of their own, and can belong to one portion only, and that the wildest, of the coasts of storm-lashed Britain. The barren heath above, brown and purple, and gorgeous with yellow broom and golden gorse, with stones protruding from its dusky surface like the bones of a buried giant, has its character too. How grandly the rocks stand forward to bear and beat back the rush of the mighty tide-waves—billows such as only surge in from the vast Atlantic, to break upon the Cornish cliffs, all scarred and splintered by their fury. Cornwall it is that, in its weird beauty of hovering mist and rich colour, lies before us; and that crescent-shaped town in the bay, half-watering place half-fishing village, is Treport. There is a Tréport in France, own cousin to this one; but the Treport of our story faces less south than west, towards the measureless waters, over the shimmering surface of which many a Cornish mariner must have gazed with untaught inquisitiveness, long before a Genoese pilot, called Christopher Colon or Columbus, shewed the way to the immense Americas that lay beyond.

That mansion nestling high up among masses of old trees, oaks and elms, that in Kent or Berkshire would be classed as of common stature, but which are Anaks of the forest here, in this region of sweeping gales and salt-sea air, is Llosthuel Court, chronicled in local guide-books. Debrett and Dod and Murray, great authorities all, agree with the local guide-books in declaring it to be the seat of the Honourable the Dowager Lady Larpent. Llosthuel Court had been one of old Joseph Larpent's judicious investments. In England, as in France, to buy up land in small plots and parcels, by retail as it were, notoriously needs a long purse and a lavish hand. But a shrewd

purchaser who can afford to offer a large lump sum for land by wholesale, gets a respectable return for his money, coupled with that prestige which nothing but 'the dirty acres' can confer. These particular acres had been bought cheaply enough from a beggared spendthrift, who lacked but cash and credit to emulate the extravagance of his ancestors. Over Llosthuel Court and its wide domains Lady Larpent now reigned supreme. To say that the Dowager, as uncontrolled mistress of this large property, with all its claims manorial and riparian, its royalty of mines and minerals, its rights of fishery and turbary, of pasturage and pannage, was universally popular, would be to say too much. Few very prosperous persons can expect to be viewed, while living, through that flattering halo which invests the dead. Some grumbling attended Lady Larpent's high-handed efforts even to do good. People are not to be hustled out of the familiar grooves, even though the grooves be those of squalor and barbarism, without indulging in the British solace of a growl. And so there were those who felt, and those who feigned to feel, a sentimental regret for the 'old Squires,' as they called the dispossessed Penhuels of Llosthuel—King Logs at their best—and who spoke of the Dowager behind her back by the nicknames of My Lady Absolute and Madam Moneybags.

It was a mellow day, tenderly bright, as becomes the Far West, and the peacocks on the stone terrace sunned their sweeping trains and sheeny necks until every jewelled iris of their resplendent feathers sparkled in the welcome rays. In the blue drawing-room—there was a white as well as a yellow and a blue drawing-room at Llosthuel Court—was Maud Stanhope, alone beside an open window that commanded a pleasant prospect, rose-garden and terrace and shrubbery, green meadow, and savage moor, and the many-hued flashing sea, all blended in one bird's-eye view. She had a book in her hand; but she was not reading, neither did she heed those plumed magnificos the peacocks, that, as they slowly strutted past, would intermit their stately march to stretch forth their serpentine necks and lift their tufted heads in mercenary hopes of biscuit. Her eyes—beautiful brown eyes were Maud's—passed inattentive over the glowing colour of the clumps of scarlet geranium, over the velvet greensward, over the softer green of the ferns, and seemed to gaze dreamily at the far-off range of the Welsh hills, dim and blue against the sky-line. It was evident that the girl's thoughts were far away from Llosthuel Court and all that belonged to it.

A rustle of silk, a firm weighty tread on the soft Tournay carpet, and Maud becomes conscious that her hostess is in the room. She turns, smiling. 'I have left you for a long time, my dear,' said the Dowager, with old-fashioned cordiality; 'but I am a woman of business, as I often tell you, and I have had to answer half-a-dozen letters since the post-bag came in, and to set aside as many more of them endorsed, in red ink, "No;" "Ask for particulars;" "Refer to London solicitors;" "Will consider it;" and "Politely, No," for the guidance of my right-hand man—I don't quite like styling him a secretary, and he would prefer not being called a clerk—Mr Morris. By-the-bye, Morris brings me word that old Captain Cleat, of the steamer *Western Maid*,

is dead at last. Poor old Cleat! he had been crippled with the rheumatism, and fitter for the fireside than the deck, these eighteen months—and since Christmas a bed-ridden invalid—but we didn't like to appoint a successor while he lived. Now I have in my own mind fixed on a new commander for the *Western Maid*. Can you guess Maud, love, who it is?'

Maud tried to look and even to feel a becoming interest. 'Whoever is to have the post, Aunt Larpent,' she said, 'will have a very pretty vessel to command. The *Western Maid*, as she lies in harbour yonder, looks as trim as a yacht.'

'Trim enough she is,' answered the Dowager in her imperious way; 'but that's because I hate to see anything afloat or ashore, go to ruin out of candle-end economy. The other shareholders, but for me, would have grudged every coat of fresh paint and inch of new sailcloth; but as it is, the steamer is spruce enough. I would bet any amount of kid gloves Maud, my dear, that you cannot guess the name of her new captain! Well then, I have written to offer the appointment to the hero of your last month's boating adventure at Gwen Naut—that young Ashton—Hugh Ashton. I suspect you have forgotten his name already. At your age,' complacently continued Lady Larpent, 'it is almost as easy to forget as to learn; but at my time of life it is different.'

Maud was inwardly thankful that the Dowager's self-satisfaction rendered her so conveniently blind to the fact that her niece's face had suddenly flushed to a burning crimson, and almost as soon grown pale at the mention of Hugh Ashton's name. Miss Stanhope was angry with herself because the thing was so, because her aunt's words chanced to be in such unexpected coincidence with her own thoughts, just as a random shot may fire a magazine of gunpowder. Had she passed through the novitiate of a London season—which I take to be for girls what the hardening ordeal is for a Red Indian warrior—and was she to blush thus absurdly at the mere mention of a young man who had certainly rendered her a great service, but who was as far remote from her own sphere in life as though they had been inhabitants of different planets? Why, the ninth daughter of a country clergyman could not have shewn less of high-bred indifference than she, Maud Stanhope, had done. Luckily the Dowager, sharp-sighted enough on ordinary occasions, saw nothing of Maud's tell-tale change of colour.

'Yes; the *Western Maid* it seems to me will be the very thing for young Ashton. He does not know the coast, and perhaps not much of steamers; but Long Michael, as they call him, is a good mate, and will help him out of a scrape until he sees his way. I daresay the other shareholders will grumble in their sleeves. Each of them would like a kinsman, and in any case a Cornishman, some Pol, Tre, or Pen, to get the appointment,' said the lady of Llosthuel, with that air of confident reliance on her own judgment which was familiar to all who knew her; 'but I am the Company. At all events, I have written to this young fellow Hugh, to make him the offer.'

'You have written, aunt?' rejoined Maud, feeling it incumbent on her to say something, and speaking as unconcernedly as she could.



'Yes. I have no doubt of his acceptance, and as little that the Board will confirm my nomination,' replied Lady Larpent. 'Have you seen Lucius to-day?' she asked; and as she put the question, her observant eyes sought Maud's face. But this time there was not the faintest indication of a blush. No; Maud had not seen Sir Lucius, her cousin. The baronet was a late riser, and carried his London hours with him into the country. At breakfast he was never visible, declaring, as he did, that a slice of toast and a cup of chocolate supplied his simple needs; but that no motive less cogent than a meet of the foxhounds could persuade him to curtail his slumbers to the extent necessary to enable him to put in an appearance at the morning meal.

Time, in Sir Lucius's opinion, passed but very tediously at Llosthuel Court; and he had even come to feel something like a personal enmity towards the turret clock, which struck the hours of the day with such pedantic slowness. He chafed, as chained-up dogs are prone to chafe, against the quasi-bondage to which he had to submit. Why was he at Llosthuel, why condemned to inhabit a dwelling beneath the roof of which he must be on his best behaviour, and to saunter away his days beside the sea? Sir Lucius did not care a straw for the sea. At Cowes it was all very well, since the yachts and the Club and the matches could not very well exist without salt-water; but the Atlantic was to our dandy baronet as dreary as Sahara. His mother's grand mansion in his eyes was as dismal as a prison and as prim as a boarding-school. He would sooner have been elsewhere—almost anywhere, even in London, at that time of year fashionably impossible, had it not been for his debts. And the worst of it was that his debts were ubiquitous, meddling with and influencing every action and detail of his life. He had paid what he could not help paying to the more importunate and energetic among his tradesmen, and the sacrifice had left him almost penniless.

Sir Lucius had invitations by the dozen, and might have spent his week, his three days, or his fortnight at halls, castles, and abbeys, the owners whereof, noble, gentle, or plutocratic, would have feasted and fêted him splendidly enough, given him the run of their partridge preserves and pheasant covers and grouse moors and private theatricals; or mounted him, when the hunting season should set in, on the pick of the stable; and in fact done all that hospitality suggested, except the supplying him with ready-money. There was the rub. Without ready-money, as he acknowledged with a sigh, English country-visiting is for a sporting bachelor, especially when that bachelor has a handle to his name, impossible. There are fast country-houses where gambling in some shape, even though it take the form of guinea-pool or of unlimited loo in the small-hours, is always going on. There are slow country-houses where gruff grooms of the stables and gracious grooms of the chambers, martinet head-keepers, and Behemoths of butlers, levy cruel toll upon the purses of their master's guests. There are half a score of cases constantly turning up in which he whom Dives delights to honour must put his hand in his pocket; and woe to his social good character if that pocket be empty!

Those of Sir Lucius were as bare as the pockets of a man of his station well could be, and all his

diplomacy had hitherto failed in producing the desired effect of inducing his mother to replenish them.

'It is a pity that Lucius should be so idle,' said the Dowager, with a slight contraction of her resolute brows.

'It is a pity, I am sure, that he should have nothing to interest him,' returned Maud.

'What are you two about—singing my praises, I hope, for I certainly caught the sound of my own name?' imperturbably inquired Sir Lucius, as he strolled into the room. 'How do you do, mother?—Good-morning, Maud! It is morning still, you know, socially and conventionally, though the shadow of the sun-dial points the wrong way, and the natives have trudged from work to what they call their dinner, and trudged back again, already. I should like excessively to be a plough-boy, and earn my eighteen-pence a day, and have a healthy appetite for beans and bacon! As it is, I feel myself an awful drone, mother, in this agricultural hive of yours, and scarcely like to venture out into the model farm, for fear the working bees should set upon me and sting me to death, as not worth my keep, I assure you.'

#### CHAPTER VI.—SIR LUCIUS AT HOME.

There are Happy Families elsewhere than behind the wires of a travelling showman's cage, and in the very best society we may often find the keen raven and the plump guinea-pig, the pert magpie, the pink-eyed rabbit, the meek white mouse, and the blinking owl, in pacific contiguity. The cuckoo differs less from the hedge-sparrow than do some brothers and sisters, some parents and children, from their nearest and dearest. Can flashing Miss Falcon really be the daughter of mild Mrs Dove? Is yonder bold-faced boy, who seems ready, like a young buccaneer, to take the world by storm, actually of the same brood as gentle James the budding curate, or that incipient City man, careful little Bertie? Nothing but the viewless chain of habit could link together natures so various and so antagonistic.

Sir Lucius Larpent, in the family to which he belonged, bore some resemblance to a hawk in a poultry-yard; and just as a hawk whose clipped wing-feathers disable him from flight, learns to consort peaceably with the very hens over whose half-fledged chickens he was wont to hover ominous, so did the baronet try to appear in as favourable a light as possible before the other inmates of Llosthuel Court. His temper was bad; but he kept it, like a runaway horse, well in hand. His selfishness was too patent to be concealed; but he was clever enough to gloss it over with a certain half-humorous varnish that was not wholly unattractive—at least to women, who rather like a young man to possess, as the phrase is, a will of his own, and who do not object to his having personal tastes and habits of a decided sort. But Lady Larpent had her doubts. Her other offspring had characters that she could appreciate. Edgar promised to turn out a generous manly young fellow. Willie was a bright lovable boy. The Dowager sighed now and then as the suspicion forced itself upon her that her eldest son differed from his brethren as a vulture differs from a pigeon.

But Sir Lucius, good, bad, or indifferent as the

case might be, was still the head of the family, a baronet in fact, and in all probability the future Lord Penrith. As such it was much to be desired that he should become the husband of Maud Stanhope. Such was Lady Larpent's pet project; and it cost her many an anxious moment and many a sleepless hour that so little progress should be made towards bringing the young people together. It had been a part of the Dowager's simple social belief that a young man and a young woman brought into each other's society in a rather dull country-house, must of necessity fall in love. To this end she had insisted that Maud should prolong her visit, and that Sir Lucius should continue to be a resident beneath her roof. To this end she tightened her purse-strings, and was deaf to her son's frequent hints that a supply of cash just then would be peculiarly acceptable.

Alas! in matters matrimonial, as in other affairs, there is often a justification for the homely proverb which tells us that although you may bring a horse to the water, you cannot make him drink. It is of no use to bring two young people together, if of such bringing nothing comes. And so it was in this instance. All Lady Larpent's pains and forethought were apparently wasted. She did indeed see, or thought that she saw, some slight indications on Sir Lucius's part of a preference for Maud's society; but if real, the sentiment was too feeble to ruffle the languid equanimity of the baronet's habitual demeanour. And Miss Stanhope did not at any time appear to have her titled cousin uppermost in her thoughts.

'I have got, or am going to have, a new captain for the *Western Maid*, Lucius,' said the Dowager, recurring to the previous topic, since a subject of discourse in the quietude of country life will, like leaf-gold, bear a good deal of hammering. 'Old Captain Cleat, who commanded the steamer, is dead. And I can do as I like now.'

'*Western Maid*? Ah yes! that's the prettyish bit of a boat in harbour at Treport there, and that belongs to the Royal Cornish Tug and Salvage Company, which I take to be a fine and round-about way, mother, of describing yourself. It was my grandfather Joseph that founded the Company, wasn't it? and left you about nine hundred of the thousand shares which compose it; so that you can give your orders to Company, I fancy, just as you can to any other understrappers in these parts. Well, who is to have the command of this trim little coasting-steamer of your Ladyship's? Some old Triton, I suppose, who has a red face and a hoarse voice, due to the combined effects of rum and bad weather, and who might be twin-brother to Cleat departed.'

Lady Larpent was often amused at her son's sallies. She had her doubts however, as to how far this one might be good-naturedly meant, so she knit her weighty brows as she said: 'The future captain of the *Western Maid*, Lucius, is a person very unlike your ideal portrait, being as he is, no other than the brave young fellow who saved Maud's life at Bala yonder—Hugh Ashton by name.'

'What! the boatman—the fresh-water sailor?' exclaimed Sir Lucius with a sneer, that for the moment disfigured his handsome mouth. 'What, in the name of all that's astonishing, mother, can have put it into your head to give the command of a smart vessel to such a fellow as that?'

It is singular how varied a meaning may be attached to the word 'fellow,' according to the intonation of the speaker. It can imply an affectionate familiarity, a sort of verbal caress, or a simple and impartial description; or again, a contemptuous gibe. Sir Lucius had imparted to its harmless two syllables as bitter a seasoning of scorn as human lips could well express.

'He saved my life—he risked his own in doing so,' said Maud Stanhope indignantly. 'I am sorry, cousin, that the service should count for so little in your eyes.'

'And I am sorry, Lucius,' said the Dowager gravely and with displeasure in her voice, 'that you permit yourself to speak thus disparagingly regarding one of whom you know, as I am well assured, nothing but good, and whom I am myself inclined to think rather more highly of than you do. I feel that a deep debt of gratitude is owing on the part of the family to this Hugh Ashton—none the less so because his father perished in the act of helping my dear Willie to reach the shore—and I, at all events, have an old-fashioned habit of not neglecting what I consider as a duty. Llosthuel, after all, is mine—my own' (perhaps these last words were rather too emphatically spoken), 'and so is the rest of my property, including my interest in that Coasting Company concerning which you have chosen to be so witty, Lucius.'

Sir Lucius winced and bit his lip sharply—it was a trick of his from boyhood, when thwarted—and then the scowl that had gathered about his darkling brows passed away, and it was with a bright smile and a light laugh that he made answer: 'You are right, mother, and I was wrong. I spoke hastily, as I suppose, and I am afraid not quite fairly, of this nautical paladin of yours in the blue Jersey and straw-hat. He has lots of pluck, anyhow, and swims like an otter; and we ought all of us to be much obliged to him, I am sure, for his spirited behaviour at Gwen Naut,' continued the baronet in a tone that he tried to prevent from being grudging and sarcastic. 'But there did seem to be something comical at first sight in the idea of transplanting him from fresh to salt water. Who was Dibdin's rustic hero, that

Left his poor plough to go ploughing the deep?

This is a change of the same sort, but perhaps less striking. At anyrate I wish Mr Hugh Ashton good luck—full nets at the pilchard-fishing, and later on, plenty of wrecks—if it isn't wrong to say so—as captain of the *Western Maid*.'

Lady Larpent was mollified, but not quite content. She had observed more than once that any positive assertion of her own rights and powers as regarded the management of the property was certain to have a sobering influence over the skittish temper of her son. And it is not the noblest nature upon which a veiled threat produces more effect than argument or entreaty could do. Also her shrewd ear was prompt to detect something discordant, like a false note in music, in the baronet's recent speech. But Maud, whom experience had not as yet gifted with the skill to know the ring of base metal when she heard it, softened towards her kinsman.

'That is kind—that is generous of you, Lucius,' said the girl, sidling towards her cousin as she

spoke, and smiling upon him. A glorious smile it was, that rare one of Maud's; and Lady Larpent, as she noted it, began to hope that her own match-making day-dream might at length come true. Then came in Willie and Edgar, making tumultuous entry, as boys always do, and full, as boys always are, of news and rumours in which marriage and giving in marriage find no place. There was a stir among the miners. Pol-wheedle and Tredyddlum mines had suddenly been closed, and three parishes were idle and breadless.

'Not a hundred ounces a week all this year, they say, to send to Lostwithiel smelting-works, from both the pits together,' said Edgar, with a boy's solemn affectation of superior knowledge; 'so I suppose the London Company won't find money any longer for expenses, though the poor women, with their shawls over their heads, are crooning and crying about the main adit like mad. —Isn't it a shame, mother?'

'Then there's a Portuguese brig with a cargo of wine, and abandoned by her crew, washing, washing to and fro with every tide, and last sighted off the Eddystone.' It was Willie who narrated this, which he had lately heard from fishers on the beach; and at the hearing of it Sir Lucius smiled.

'A chance for your protégé, mother,' he said lightly. 'A derelict wine-ship in the Channel, I take it, is the nearest approach to a captured Spanish galleon that our prosaic laws allow in these degenerate days, and I believe you let your hounds have a share of the quarry they run down.'

'Our rules,' said Lady Larpent, somewhat stiffly, 'certainly do allow the commander of a steamer some part of the salvage earned by the Company in such a case. But come, Lucius; we had better let the subject drop, if you please. British seamen, so far as my experience goes, always think of saving life first, and their claims on the Admiralty Court afterwards; and Hugh Ashton I am sure will be no exception to the rule, when he comes among us here.'

The boys opened their eyes. But when they heard that their humble acquaintance of Gwen Nant was to be the new captain of the *Western Maid*, their delight was hearty and honest.

'Dear old Hugh!' exclaimed both in a breath. 'I don't know a better fellow, or a braver; and it will be as good as a play to have him so near us as Treport here.'

## PLOUGH-MONDAY:

### STRAY NOTES ON AN OLD CUSTOM.

ALL over England in years gone by, the time-honoured festival of Plough-Monday was joyously observed by the peasantry. On this day, which is always the first Monday after Twelfth-day, agricultural labourers and husbandmen were accustomed to draw about a plough and solicit money, with mummeries and dancing, preparatory to the recommencement of their tasks after the Christmas holidays. In a few places they still draw the plough, but the sport is mostly now confined to mumming and alms-gathering. Formerly, the 'fool-plough,' as it was called, was absolutely essential to the exhibition, and was dragged in procession to the doors of towns-folk and villagers.

Long ropes were attached to it; and from thirty to forty stalwart young fellows, in clean white shirts or smocks, but protected from the weather by warm waistcoats underneath, drew it along. Their smocks were gaily decorated all over with bright-coloured ribbons, tied in knots and bows, and their hats were adorned in the same way. The pageant usually included an old woman, or a boy dressed up to represent one, who was gaily bedizened and called 'Bessy.' There was also a country bumpkin dressed up to play the 'fool.' He was covered with ribbons and clad in skins, with a depending tail, and carried a small box or can, which he rattled about among the spectators to collect donations in. These masqueraders were attended by music and morris-dancers. And there was always a frolicsome romp by a few girls in gaudy finery. The money collected was afterwards spent in feasting and conviviality.

In olden times very little work was ever done during the twelve days devoted to Christmas, and farmers were then wont to feast and reward their husbandmen for past industry. Plough-Monday served to remind them of their business; and on the morning of that day both men and maidens strove who could shew their readiness to commence the labours of the newly awakened year by rising the earliest.

The origin of this ancient festival has been attributed to the fact that in the olden times a light called the 'Plough-light' was maintained by the peasantry in many of the churches, to obtain a blessing on their work, and that on Plough-Monday they held a feast, and went about with a plough and dancers to beg money for the support of the light. The Reformation put a stop to these lights; but the festival to which they gave rise remained, and the practice of going about with the plough begging for money, continued; the 'money for light' serving to fill the coffers of the village alehouse. In the North Riding of Yorkshire, a custom was kept up even so late as the present century, closely analogous to the ancient rites of Plough-Monday. Another old custom in the same part of England was when a new tenant entered upon a farm, for the neighbours to give him what was called a 'plough-day.' This meant that they would let him have the use of all their ploughs and the labour of all their ploughmen and plough-horses on a fixed day to prepare his ground for the seed. This custom is still prevalent in many parts of Great Britain—a piece of friendly courtesy shewn to the new tenant by the neighbouring farmers.

Rude and rough though some of these old customs were, the homely pageant and rustic revelries which always marked Plough-Monday as a red-letter day in the calendar of the peasantry, threw a life into the dreary scenes of winter, and made bright for a time many a desolate village and secluded hamlet. The procession would start upon its way from village to village in the early gray of the morning, and before noon it would become considerably augmented; for the ploughmen from every surrounding farm and homestead would take a part in the rustic saturnalia of the day. And the women-folk too would have a share in the proceedings; for theirs was the task of bedizening their brothers and sweethearts with flaunting ribbons and rosettes, which they stuck promiscuously about their snow-white smocks. Sometimes

the procession would be joined in by thrashers carrying their flails, reapers bearing their sickles, and carters with their long whips, which they cracked continuously in order to add to the general tumult. But the life of the party was invariably 'Bessy,' who would rattle his box and dance so high that he shewed his thick knitted stockings and corduroy breeches; and very often, if there was a thaw, would tuck up his gown-skirts under his waistcoat, and shake the bonnet off his head, and disarrange the long ringlets which ought to have concealed his whiskers.

At the largest farmhouse of the district the mummers were generally treated to cakes and ale as well as to money. But if by any chance the owner happened to behave niggardly, or shut his door in their faces, 'Bessy' would rattle the box, the men would dance and blow their horns, or else shout with all their might; and if there was still no sign, no coming forth of either bread-and-cheese or ale, then the word was given, the plough-share driven into the soil in front of the house, the whole body of men yoked, pulling like one, and in a minute or two the trim parterre would become as brown and rutted as a newly ploughed field. But this was not often done; for everybody would wish 'God-speed the plough,' and contribute something; and were it but little, the men did not murmur, although they might afterwards discuss the stinginess of the giver among themselves, particularly if he happened to be what they called 'well off in the world.'

But the real Pough-day festivities, such as our rude forefathers delighted to indulge in, are now no longer kept up; and it is not without some shadow of regret that we can look back upon them, and feel that they no more exist, except in the imaginations of those who still have some lingering reverence for the things of the past and for the quaint manners and customs of bygone days. The world seems to be growing more and more artificial with each succeeding generation. The love of such primitive pursuits as those we have been describing has as it were died out in the land. The country has learned to mock the fashions and amusements of the town; the taste of the people has become too worldly for purely natural enjoyment. No doubt modern civilisation has done much in providing for us great and incalculable advantages which our ancestors did not possess; but they, in their turn, probably derived more real gratification from their simple pleasures than we are able to draw from all the alluring pastimes and fashionable frivolities of our advanced state of society.

In those olden times the people were more susceptible to pleasurable impressions from external objects; freer to contemplate and admire all that was beautiful in mere outward nature. Now, in our own time, modern resources provide us with newer modes of recreation—more in accordance perhaps with the artificial lives led by the mankind of to-day, but very far removed from those ancient standards of primitive simplicity adopted and followed by our forefathers. And among other changes which time has wrought in our manners and ways of living, the decadence of many of these homely customs holds a prominent place. The festive doings and merry antics which served to make bright the lives of the peasantry on the few holidays they were

allowed to indulge in during the year, seem to be as much buried in the oblivion of the past as the names of the rustic swains who enacted the chief parts in each rural dance and simple pageant. Such wholesome outdoor amusements are not to the taste of the country lads and lassies of the present epoch, who are above amusing themselves with mere puerile pleasures. Indeed—to quote the words of an old poet who lived some two or three centuries ago, and who even in his day had begun to note the gradual decline of our ancient sports and pastimes—it may now truly be said that

The pipe and pot are made the only prize  
Which all our spiteful youth do exercise.

## THE SILVER LEVER.

VI.

THERE was no mistaking it. Many a time when he was a lad his uncle had held it ticking at his ear, and he knew every line in the cracked enamel of its face. He could trace there the squinting countenance which the cracked lines had formed for fancy when he was a boy. He knew every flower painted between the fat Roman figures. But all these aids to memory were unconscious, and he did not think of examining them, any more than you would look for the wart on your friend's nose before you shook hands, or make sure of the colour of your divinity's eyes before kissing her. They were points he could have sworn by, but he never thought of them at the moment. He knew the watch, as he would have known the face of an old friend.

I have feebly indicated the enormous revulsion of his soul at that moment. No man can paint a hurricane, and a storm is but a poor symbol of tumult in the soul. For a minute, great throes of joy shook his heart, and then came calm and the quiet of a settled purpose. There were memories with him then which he would have bartered for no present joys possible to him. And there was no thought or shadow of a thought of any benefit to himself to arouse from this astounding accident. The memory of his cousin filled his heart. He saw her ways made smooth, and beheld her like the sun making life bright for the poor; cheering cold hearts, and gladdening her own.

It was not unnatural perhaps, since he was absolutely certain that any millionaire in the city would have given twenty thousand pounds to have that battered lever and to know its secret, that a sudden fear should fall upon him that some man should rush in and secure it, and snatch the treasure from his fingers. He counted his small store of money over with trembling hands. He had but eleven shillings.

He was waiting for the clock to strike. On the 20th day of April and the 20th day of October in each year he drew the income which resulted from the miserable remnant of his father's fortune. The half-yearly sum amounted to fifteen pounds twelve shillings; and he was now waiting for the hour at which he should call upon the man of business who managed this final fragment of his property. And though he knew there could be few things less likely in the world than that during his absence any stranger should buy the watch and take it away with him, yet he dreaded



it so much that he dared not trust the chance. He walked into the pawnbroker's shop and asked to see the watch. The assistant handed it to him. He pressed the spring, and the back fell open limply, and there, sure enough, were latitudinal and longitudinal lines, and other indications of the whereabouts of the buried treasure. He closed the case again and asked the assistant how long the shop remained open.

'Close in ten minutes,' said the assistant, rubbing his cold nose with the edge of a blotting-pad.

'I will buy the watch,' said Robert, speaking quite calmly, 'but I have not quite enough money with me. I will leave this eleven shillings as a deposit. In twenty minutes I will be at the public-house opposite with the rest of the money. Will you meet me there?'

'Couldn't do it,' said the assistant.

'Take nine shillings then, as a deposit,' said Robert quietly; 'and keep the other two for yourself.'

'All right,' said the assistant, nodding cheerfully, and pocketing the two shillings. He was a young man of no imagination, and the reflection that 'this was a rum start' quite satisfied him.

Robert hurried to his man of business, whose office was in Shoe Lane.

'Now Ryder,' said the man of business, 'you're here before your time, you know.'

'I shall not trouble you again,' said Robert. 'Let me have my money at once, if you please, and be good enough to wait for me for half an hour. I have an important business proposal to make to you.'

'My good fellow,' said the man of business, 'I can't wait half an hour for you.'

'You don't make fifty pounds every half-hour of your life,' said Robert. 'You may make it within the next thirty minutes if you choose. But let me have my money now, if you please.'

Was this the starven and submissive hunchback whom he had snubbed so persistently and successfully this last dozen years. The man of business was amazed. He took refuge in banter.

'Are you turned millionaire all of a sudden, Ryder?'

'No,' said the hunchback.

'You've come in for a fortune anyhow?'

'I have,' said Robert; and the countenance of that man of business underwent a change. 'Kindly give me my money now, and wait here for half an hour.'

The receipt ready drawn up and stamped was handed over and signed. Three five-pound notes, a half-sovereign, a shilling, and elevenpence in bronze, lay on the table. The man of business had paid himself for the stamp. Robert took up the money, and went his way eagerly. Five minutes later, and the watch was his and in his own possession; and he was back in Shoe Lane at the business man's door before half the specified time had expired. Robert's last remnant of fortune was a remarkably successful mortgage. It paid ten per cent. per annum. The security had always been considered shaky until the beginning of that year, when the property had fallen into the hands of trustees, who had already written about paying off the mortgage. Ten per cent. was a ridiculous interest to pay on a safe property, and the trustees were business men.

'The amount of this mortgage,' said Robert to

the man of business, 'is three hundred and fifty pounds. Draw up a deed to-night transferring it from me to yourself, and you shall have it for three hundred pounds.'

The man of business made some demur, and raised some question of delay and inquiry. Robert rose to go, and wore an air so resolute that the man of business relented, and undertook to have the deed ready for signature at ten o'clock on the morrow. It was a very good stroke of business for him, and he knew it. On Robert's side it was the first business-like thing he ever did in his life, and I suppose that business men will laugh at it.

He walked about London in the dismal rain, with the yellow gas-lights blearing at him like drunkards' eyes; and the crowd hustled him about the slippery pavement. But there were warmth and sunlight within him, and widespread peace; and holy Hope was there with music in the murmur of her wings. Sweet, generous, tender heart! On thee and such as thee, Fate's vulture preys too often, yet howsoever beak and talon tear the chords, they cannot kill the music.

There were rumours of terror abroad about those Turkish hills; but they had no weight against his single-hearted purpose. He was but a poor creature, and had no courage for himself, nor resolve, nor perseverance. But in *her* cause there was nothing that he would not dare, and little that he did not feel able to accomplish. He did not reason. If he had, he would never have attempted such an enterprise as that on which he was now bound. Yet he adopted some precautions, and did not act at complete haphazard. French and Italian were already in some broken sort familiar to him. He had a native turn for language, and such acquaintances as he had made in London were for the most part foreign refugees as poor and as sad as himself. He knew from general reading that these languages would be of service to him, and since the advent of Bill Dean, he had felt himself so drawn to the country in which the hidden treasure lay, that he had eagerly read all he could find concerning it. Theoretically he knew as much about the country as any stranger to it could well know, and he and Dean had settled on the map between them something like the whereabouts of the buried money. He knew how far up country the railway ran, and on what roads carriages could travel, and at what season the hills were supposed to become inaccessible to traffic. He bought a pocket compass, a revolver, a Turkish vocabulary, and the best map he could procure of the Balkan Hills.

With some sparse provision in the way of winter clothing, he started. He had never before been out of England, and when he found himself in Calais with some hours upon his hands, he strayed about with a dazed sense upon him that this first of foreign towns was less strange than it should be. The quaint thin chimies sang to him of the treasure, and the tumbling waves of the Channel had a like burden. The buried gold in those far hills was the only real thing in the world to him. Köln was a shadow, and Frankfort a shadow, and Vienna was a dream-city and no more. The Rhine, which had been one of his dreams, was still a dream, whilst the railway carriage bore him by its side with that perpetual

clank and roar which called continually: 'Gold is buried. In the mountains. Hurry forward. Gold is buried in the mountains.' Why should not others hear that exigent monotone as well as he? It sounded plainly in his heart and ears, sleeping or waking, as the time sped on. The roar of traffic in the streets of that dream Vienna took up the burden. The last steamer of the year that bore him down the Danube to Nicopolis, puffed and groaned to the same urgent chorus: 'Gold is buried. In the mountains. Hurry forward. You will find it. You will find it. You will find it.' So sang every measured refrain of sea and town and rail and river. The jolting wheels of the rough and springless araba which bore him down to Plevna sang the song in every jolt and shriek. His horse's lonely footfall as he rode southwards chanted that maddening hurrying refrain.

He found everywhere a rough but generous hospitality, and the parting salutation, 'Be with God,' was always gentle, if not always gently breathed. It was the rainy season then, and the roads along the plain were lines of bog running through a quagmire. He had bought a sheepskin coat and cap to protect him from the wretched weather, and so, until his speech bewayed him, he passed unnoticed. His broken Turkish served his purpose well, for it saved him from many necessities of speech which would have endangered his secret otherwise. Warnings of the dangers which lay northward poured in upon him more and more thickly every day. The land was smouldering with the fire of insurrection, and every here and there was breaking into flame. And the government was heaping fire on flame, and now and then experimenting on the possibilities of putting out a burning town by throwing gunpowder into the midst of it. Yet this weak and timorous hunchback, by nature and training a coward, held his way, and would not be turned aside by one hair's-breadth from his purpose. For the power of love was on him, and it was no mere treasure of buried gold which lay before him waiting for its resurrection at his hand. It was her soul, whom his soul loved. The gold was hers, and her heart should be glad of it. It should bring her a new birth and a new being. All she had loved and longed for in her girlhood, art, music, books, freehanded charity, the very light and fire of life to her, waited for her at his coming. It was the thought of her which made his miserable weakness strong, and the hand of love which drew that cowardly heart from his breast and set the spirit of a hero there.

On he rode day by day, southward, until the rain ceased, and the clear skies shone out again, precursors of the ice and snow. Scarce conscious of the change, he rode on day by day until at last he stood unknowing upon the very spot of earth on which the first man had fallen in that midnight encounter more than five-and-forty years before. The winding road, ever rising higher before him, swerved broadly westward here, and he knew that he had reached the spot at which he must quit the highway and betake him to the hills. To the left, winding along the face of the hill, ran a bridle-path. He dismounted, and led his horse up this narrow and difficult way. He had provided himself with a rough pick and spade in Orkhanie, and he bore these strapped to his shoulder. Often,

in spite of all the eager hurry which filled his heart and set his veins on fire, he had to pause for breath; but at length, after nearly an hour's climbing, he reached the summit of the mountain, and there for a minute looked about him on a scene of such sublimity as is scarcely to be found elsewhere in Europe. In spite of the intenseness of his purpose, the majesties of Nature gave him pause; for a while he drew freer breath, and felt alone with God and with the wondrous world His hands had made. But even here he saw with love's eyes, and felt by the heart of love and not his own. In some day not far distant, these scenes should be open to her, and in them her soul, hitherto imprisoned, should find free space to seek what joy she would.

Far down below him in the valley gleamed a sulky pool. No other water lay in sight, though he could survey the scene for miles. '*East of the pool*'—so read the inscription on the watch-case. Already he saw the Mecca of his pilgrimage.

He reached the spot, travelling—not knowing it—by the way those murderous feet had taken years ago. Between two great trees on the eastern side of the pool lay an immense moss-grown fragment of rock, in which he found clearly outlined the form of the stone scratched upon the watch-case. There was little verdure and no underwood about the stone. He tethered his horse to the nearer tree, and marked out with the pick a trench the whole length of the thickness of the stone, five feet from its end. Then he began to dig. His weak strokes made but slow impression on the soil, but he laboured as men work when only labour stands between life and death. Suddenly the point of the pick caught something and dragged him forward into the hole. He scrambled to his feet and found that the pick's point was imbedded in a flat piece of leather. Seizing the spade, he cleared the earth away from this right and left, until it revealed itself as a broad strap connecting two leathern cases. He worked now like a madman, though the force of his strokes grew fainter every moment. One of the cases at last was cleared, and seizing the strap, he dragged it up from the place in which it had rested for so many years. When his weak hold relaxed, it toppled and fell open. Within it he could see nothing but mould. He fell upon his knees and explored it with his hands. Earth, and nothing but earth. With failing limbs and failing heart he laboured to release the second case. The same failure greeted him. In dragging out the second case he had laid bare another leathern band, and his hopes revived, and lent him new strength. The second band was connected in like manner with the first with two cases of thick leather, and these, like the others, were empty of all but mould. No! What was this? A single Turkish lira glimmered golden on the soil. The hunchback sat upon the edge of this grave of his hopes, and his heart died within him. His face drooped down and his hands covered it. The soft white snow-flakes fell upon his bowed and wearied figure. The horse broke from the tether, and wandered down the valley, cropping here and there. He did not know it, and would not have heeded had he known. And the snow and the night fell together as he sat there beside the grave, which held no treasure save that of his own soul despoiled and broken.

## L'ENVOI.

Life's troubles had been heavy on Sarah Glossop at one time; but in the sleepy cathedral city in which her new lot was cast, the time went smoothly. She lived with a benevolent elderly rather stupid old Dean and his elderly benevolent and keen-eyed wife. The old couple had young children when Sarah Glossop first entered their service, and these children grew up into men and women under her care, and there was much love between them. Love makes life's burdens light, and this broken heart lived and grew again in the midst of quiet home influences. The household knew her story and respected her griefs. The very servant wenches knew that this calm and beautiful creature, who looked more like a queen than a housekeeper, had 'seen trouble,' and were tenderer with her on that account. The years went on as they have a habit of doing, and brought tranquillity. Take courage, you who suffer. Even you to whom sorrow is no casual mistress, but a wife, will find her face some day grown lovely, and in her gentleness and charity and tender hope you will take comfort.

For her hapless cousin, Sarah felt a very sincere and strong affection, and for the griefs which had fallen upon him through her husband's misdeeds a sympathy which was half self-accusation. They corresponded together, and he had always led her to believe that in worldly matters he was passably prosperous. She had written to him twice, and had received no answer, and was growing anxious about him, when the hand of Fortune touched her again upon the shoulder, and the sphere of her life was changed.

The dull old Dean and the keen old lady never quarrelled in all their benevolent lives either with each other or with the dwellers in the tents of the stranger. But for once they spoke sharply to each other across the breakfast-table.

'I tell you, my dear,' said the Dean, for he knew how to be obstinate at times, 'that it is quite impossible and romantic and absurd.'

'And I tell you, my dear,' said his lady, 'that I'm certain that it's true for all that; and we'll have Glossop up and see about it.'

At that the keen old lady rang the bell and demanded Mrs Glossop. Mrs Glossop came up stairs and confronted the old lady. The Dean took a tremulous stand upon the hearth-rug.

'Sit down Glossop,' said the old lady; and the housekeeper, in much surprise at this command, sat down.

'What was your father's Christian name, Glossop?'

'My father's name was Job Ryder,' the housekeeper answered.

'And where,' asked the keen old lady, with triumph in her face and voice, 'did your father live?'

'At Coventry.'

'Yes,' said the old lady, with the triumph growing in her eyes. 'And what did he call the cottage he lived in?'

'He called it Konak Cottage,' said the housekeeper. 'It was a foreign name, but he had been a good deal abroad in his younger days.'

'Now don't disturb yourself Glossop,' said the Dean's keen old lady; 'but read that.'

She set a copy of the *Times* before the house-

keeper and laid a finger on an advertisement. This advertisement bore heading:

'BANK OF ENGLAND—Unclaimed Stock.'

And it set forth the fact, that whereas since the year 1859 stock to the amount of one hundred thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds had lain unclaimed in the name of Job Ryder of Konak Cottage, Coventry, Gentleman; notice was thereby given that unless within three months, claim should be made, the said stock would be transferred to the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt.

'Glossop,' said the keen old lady, as the housekeeper looked up with an expression of bewilderment, 'you're a great heiress.'

And thus, after all, Job Ryder had carried that blood-bought treasure home with him; thus had it accumulated at interest; and in this wise its presence was revealed. His daughter's claim was without difficulty established, and allowed; and she went out into London to set to work whatever appliances money could put in action for the discovery of her cousin.

He and she met no more on earth; for even at the hour at which the first drop of that shower of charity which made the poor of the old cathedral city happy, fell upon them, the hunchback sat upon the edge of the grave his hands had made. The great flakes fell thicker and thicker together. The bleak wind pushed them by, and they fled from its rude touch, and whirled helplessly in fantastic circles. But they closed again in a phalanx dense though frail, and fell upon the drooping figure gently, as though they fain would build a cairn to mark the spot where so much tenderness and valour lay. The hands of the storm modelled that cold and unenduring monument, and built it to completeness, as under its pure shadow his pure soul fell to sleep.

And those fair spirits, the murmurs of whose wings make tender music for the pure in heart, abode with him, and he with them. And for him there shall be no more tears nor any sorrow.

## POST-OFFICE CURIOSITIES.

As a rule, we eschew Blue-books; but there is one official annual—the Postmaster-general's Report—in which we always look for a little amusing reading, and are rarely disappointed. Last year's issue is exceptionally entertaining. There is the usual array of statistics, through which we do not purpose wading; merely noting that despite the bad times, the Post-office cannot complain of slackness of business, since there has been an increase of more than four per cent in the number of letters, post-cards, newspapers, book-packets, &c. passing through the post in the space of twelve months; the total for 1877 standing at 1,477,828,200; of which 1,057,732,200 were letters proper, 102,237,300 post-cards, and 128,588,000 newspapers.

The portion of the Report in which we are most interested is that devoted to Correspondents, whose extraordinary applications are published by the Postmaster-general just to shew what very vague ideas some people entertain regarding the scope of postal operations and the duties of postal officials. A dweller in Kansas writes: 'HONERAD SIR—My Grandfather Mr John — made a will on or about 22 Oct. 18— dated at — leaving to his son, my Father, 1000*l*, the interest to be paid to him

half yearly, the principle to be divided among his children at his death. My father died on the — last leaving myself and one brother who wishes to look up collect the money for us.' Why this gentleman took the trouble to let Lord John Manners know so much of the family affairs, is not very clear. A countryman of his is more explicit, as he is more exacting. He says: 'As I have no correspondent in London at present I adopt this plan of procuring one that I can transact business through. The matter I wish to call your attention to is this. To the estate of — and the — heirs. The papers were sent here once but have been lost. — died in London about forty-five years ago, and left a large estate of which my client's interest would be about seventy-five thousand dollars at the time of his death. Will you please inform me what it is necessary for us to do in the matter in full.'

The legacy-hunter is not alone in desiring to obtain legal advice gratis; a poor man with a grievance indites the following somewhat incoherent epistle: 'MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN—I humbly beg your consideration if there is no law to stop persons from calling all manner of bad names day after day as it is annoying me very much in my calling as a Gardener & Seedsman; as I have applied to the office at — for a summons for a little protection and they tell me not, so i think it rather too hard for me as i have done all the good I have had the means to do with the Hospitals and Institutions and all charityable purposes both in — and elsewhere if needed, but i suffer from lameness with a ulcerated leg not being able for laborious hard work although i wish to do as i would be done by. Please to answer this at your leisure.'

Not a few honest folks are possessed with the notion that the Post-office is as much concerned with missing people as missing letters. One poor woman, addressing herself 'To Controul of the Dead Office, Newcastle,' says: 'i rite a Line two see if you hard Enny thing of my husband—that was left at — ill. please will you rite back by return of post as we are in great trouble.' She evidently feared her husband was dead, and supposed in that case the 'Dead Office' would know it. An Irishwoman, 'quite a stranger in London, only two months out of Ireland,' entreates the Postmaster-general to help her to find her husband, being incapable of undertaking the search herself, because she would be sure to go astray, and besides has no money. 'I want to find out my mother and sisters who are in Melbourne in Australia I believe,' writes a distressed damsel, 'if you would find them out for me let me know by return of post, and also your charge at the lowest.' But of all the feminine applications for information, the funniest is certainly this: 'Will you, if you please, let me know if there is such a gentelman as Mr — in —. i beleave he is a Chirch Cluridgman. There is a young man in — who has been engaged to my sister and he says Mrs — at — is his sister. i should very much like to know, if you will oblige me by sending. i thought if Mrs — was his sister i would rite and ask for his charctar because he is a stranger to us all.'

'Wanted a lady to correspond with a gentleman for mutual improvement,' is a form of advertisement constantly appearing in American news-

papers; and there are in the States such things as Corresponding Bureaus, where 'young people of both sexes can be supplied with high-toned and intelligent correspondents.' For reasons best known to himself, a gentleman hailing from Indiana, aged eighteen, who has travelled all over the United States and Canada, instead of seeking a correspondent in his own land, sends Lord John a letter, which he begs him to give to some young lady or gent—lady preferred, who would like to correspond with him on topics of general interest.

Another American, this time a Tennessean, has a yet more extraordinary commission for the Postmaster-general. He writes: 'DEAR SIR—I want you to do me a kine to hand this to some good watchmaker and tell him to see if I can by a instrument to tell where gold or silver is in the ground or if there is an instrument maid to find mettel—gold or silver—that are in the ground. If it will attract it—A instrument for that perpos—I understand there are sutch a thing maid. If so, be pleas tell me where I can by one and what it will cost me. It can be sent to New York to — where I can get it. I want to get an instrument to hunt gold and silver. You will pleas write to me as I think if there are sutch a thing maid I could get one in your country. I send you a stamp.' All faith in the divining-rod is not yet lost, and there is virtue yet in Mithridate mustard—whatever that may be—or somebody would not offer to send our Postmaster-general some partridges if he would get any herbalist or greengrocer to send him a parcel of Mithridate mustard, which 'grows at Hatfield by the river-side and in the street of Peckham on the Surrey side. It don't grow in any part of —shire that I am aware of. We have the common hedge-mustard growing here; but that won't do what the gentleman wants it for.'

A young Welshman being given to understand 'that you do want men in New South Wales,' says he should be very thankful for all particulars by return. Two coloured young men of Springfield, Illinois, anxious to come to England and get work as coachmen or race-horse trainers, desired 'Mr Postmaster' to seek work for them, and 'advertise it in the papers.' A Switzer wants the Postmaster-general to obtain him a situation in the English colonies or plantations as teacher in an institution or tutor in a good family. He can speak French, German, and a little English, and says: 'I am old of twenty-two years. I should wish to be defrayed of the charges of the lodging, nourishment, &c., to have a good salary and the voyage paid. These are my conditions; perhaps you will found something for satisfy them. I will give you a commission proportionably to the importance of the place.'

Our foreign friend concludes somewhat peremptorily, but we may be sure the fault was not an intentional one; which is more than can be said in the case of the English school-boy who gave one of the Post-office officials a bit of his mind in this very bumptious fashion: 'SIR—Not having received the live bullfinch mentioned by you as having arrived at the Returned Letter Office two days ago, having been posted as a letter contrary to the regulations of the postal system, I now write to ask you to have the bird fed and forwarded at once to —, and apply for all fines and expenses to —. If this is not done, and



I do not receive the bird before the end of the week, I shall write to the Postmaster-general, who is a very intimate friend of my father's, and ask him to see that measures are taken against you for neglect. This is not an idle threat, so you will oblige me by following the above instructions.'

### TWICE BURIED.

WHAT I am about to relate, incredible as it may seem, is perfectly true, and occurred some years ago on board a ship in which I was then serving my time. We were thirty-five or forty days from home, had crossed the line, and were getting the first of the south-east trades, when our second-mate began to break down. He had joined the vessel in bad health, but seemed to get better in the tropics; and now again he felt himself gradually sinking. There was no doctor on board, our ship not carrying passengers that voyage; but it was easy to see he was in a rapid decline. How sorry we all were! Everybody liked him—a kind considerate officer; a cool skilful seaman, somewhat reserved perhaps, but not cold; never asking any one to perform a disagreeable or dangerous duty without lending a hand himself. And there he lay dying—so young, handsome, strong. Oh, it seemed very hard! The song and laugh were hushed around the decks, our steps fell light as we passed over his head, and often through the watches one of us youngsters would look in to see if Mr Linden wanted anything, sometimes coming out pale and scared; he looked so white and still, we knew not was it sleep or death.

We had passed the Cape of Storms, and were now far down in the region of mists and snow, where the vast ice-islands wander in lonely awful grandeur, and fierce westerly gales howled after us as we flew on our easterly course to Australia. One night, wild and dark, with every appearance of a heavy storm at hand, I was passing the second-mate's berth when I heard his voice feebly calling after me. He was sitting up in his bunk hardly able to speak, his lips dry and burning. I ran off to fetch him a drink. Alas! there was nothing to be got but water, thick and reddish, from the ship's iron tanks. Bad as it was, he drank it eagerly, and becoming more composed, lay down, still keeping hold of my hand. Then his mind seemed to wander back to the days of his childhood, back to happier times, when with the girl he loved, he strayed through sweet country lanes, and all was peace and rest. While in dreary contrast, the rising wind moaned and sobbed through our rigging like some living thing in pain, and men's steps were hurrying along the decks preparing for the battle that must soon be fought. At last the cloud passed from his mind, and he turned to me, grasping my hand tightly, and spoke of his mother and sister and that other loved one whom he would never see again. Without him they would be alone in the world. Lovingly, lingeringly, he dwelt on them till he made me cry like a child. Then he lay back with his head on my arm, and gradually passed away to the better land.

We could not bury him that night. It was a fierce struggle all the time to shorten sail; for nearly five hours we were all on the foreyard, trying to furl the foresail, which was blown to pieces in the end. At last, morning broke on the

mad raging sea. The sailmaker sewed a bag of canvas round the corpse; we placed two ten-pound shot at his feet; the seas were breaking too heavily on the main-deck, so we carried him tenderly up on the poop. Never shall I forget that burial scene. The black lowering sky, the ship under close-reefed topsails flying for her life from the pursuing snowy crested billows. Near her stern all hands were grouped, the wind blowing the old captain's gray hair wildly about, the rain and hail beating on our bared heads, and pattering on the deck like a thousand feet; the solemn faces stern and sad; and on the wheel-grating lay all that was left of the man we loved. The captain read a few words till something seemed to choke him; he pointed over the stern, and turned away. A dull splash was heard. Like men in a dream we gazed at the spot as a sea broke over it. I fancied I still saw it gyrating a little, then slowly descending, end first, through the quiet depths; and in imagination I could behold strange unknown monsters sweeping towards it, regarding it with their dull eyes as something yet more strange than themselves, still going down, past the regions of ocean-life, slower and slower, till at last, balanced by the pressure of waters, it ceases to descend, standing in the soundless moveless depth like Mohammed's coffin, floating between surface and bottom.

On flew the vessel, till many a mile lay between us and that sad spot on the lonely deep. But a change was coming round by the southward; the wind hauled to the eastward, and before dark we were hove to, the wind blowing from the eastward and northward a perfect hurricane. At about two bells (one o'clock) in the middle watch, King (my messmate) and myself were standing on the poop, in the lee of the mizzen-mast, watching the seas as they broke on the main-deck, trying to distinguish objects by the garish light of the white foam. Occasionally a pale lightning flash shewed the wild waters around us, the labouring ship seeming to sweep the inky sky with her mast-heads; a scene to us youngsters indescribably terrible. The third-mate was on watch; he was standing over to windward, stern and silent. The dead man and he had been close friends. They had wandered over the world together for years, and he seemed to feel his loss deeply. Suddenly we heard his voice: 'Go for'ard, one of you, and see if the look-out is all right.' Rather a disagreeable duty; for though the rain and spray had wet us through already, yet the water in our clothes was warm by this time; and going along that main-deck exposed us to the probability of a fresh supply of a colder temperature. 'Let us both go,' said King. We stood on the poop-ladder watching our chance, and the moment the vessel seemed steady, made a rush for the life rail round the mainmast—a sort of half-way house. I reached it in safety; but poor King's foot slipped on the slimy deck, and the same instant a huge sea leaped on board at the weather main-rigging. I climbed up the foretopgallant braces clear of it with a laugh at King's expense; but it died on my lips as a cry came borne to my ears—the cry of some one in deadly terror. I slid swiftly down the braces to the deck. The same moment a flash of lightning shewed me King still on board, clinging to the lee main-rigging, his face white and distorted with some awful fear.

'Come out of that, George,' I implored. His

position was one of great danger; but he did not stir or answer. As the vessel rolled, I was dashed against him. I clung round him to the rigging, holding on till the water had in some degree subsided through the ports and scuppers. 'What is the matter, old fellow?' I asked. 'Are you hurt?'

With his lips at my ear, he answered hoarsely: 'He's on board again, Jack!'

'He! Who?' I cried wildly.

He did not answer, but pointed to the deck. There was about a foot-depth of water on it. As the ship rolled to leeward, I saw, by the now incessant lightning, something washing to and fro in the water, with loosely tossing limbs. The ship rolled to windward—it washed away. Again the ship rolled to leeward—it washed to our feet. Tangled in the ropes, it stayed there. The lightning gleamed full on the upturned face. It was the second-mate!

Never will the horror of that moment pass from my memory. What brought the dead back again? Was the shadow of death never to leave us? A horrible faintness seemed creeping over me. I could not move. Suddenly the third-mate's voice rang out sharp and anxious: 'Where are you, youngsters?' and broke the spell. Welcome indeed was that voice to our ears; it seemed to bring us back to the world of life again. We hurried aft, and rather incoherently, I think, told him what we had seen.

'Nonsense!' he said angrily. 'Did you never see a death on board a ship before, that this has made such an impression on you?—You the watch there'—to the men—'get hold of whatever that is knocking about the decks, and secure it. Get the deck-light, one of you.'

The men went down on the main-deck, by no means cheerfully though. They soon came up again carrying something. 'It's a corpse sir,' they said in answer to the officer's inquiry. Snatching the light, he directed it on the dead man's face. All cried together: 'The second-mate!' Ay, there was the man we had buried the morning of the day before in a strong sailcloth bag, with twenty pounds-weight at his feet, on board again—our own eyes saw him. Naked and bruised he lay before us, with the dank sea-slime clinging to his swollen limbs, but nothing to account for the absence of shroud and shot. We buried him again next morning in silence and haste; and setting what sail we dared to the now favouring gale, fled away from the scene of that terrible mystery.

[We are assured by the writer of this extraordinary tale that he was himself an eye-witness, and that the details are all strictly true. He surmises that the shot and the canvas-shroud may have been imperfectly fixed, and so become disengaged from the body, which, carried along by some ocean current, was at length tossed on board by the waves.—Ed.]

#### THE MONTH. SCIENCE AND ARTS.

In our last *Month* the suggestion was quoted that the probable future of the soda-trade would be near the salt-brines. Since then a deputation from Cheshire has directed the attention of the Local government Board to the fact that the pumping-out of the enormous quantities of brine

required for the million and a half tons of salt manufactured yearly in Cheshire occasions a serious destruction of land and property. Roads, railways, canals, buildings of all kinds, pipes and drains, suffer from the sinking of the ground under which the great brine-springs lie; and if the pumping-out is to be increased, the risk of further damage will be increased in proportion. The question thereby raised is important; and it remains to be seen whether a civil engineer can be found able to keep the surface from sinking while the underlying supports are pumped away.

Another deputation has represented to the Home Secretary that something should be done by legislation or otherwise to protect certain parts of the kingdom from the disastrous effects of floods. From Somersetshire to Yorkshire, and from Essex to Lincolnshire, the counties were represented, and made out so clear a case as to lead to a belief that parliament will be called on in the coming session to sanction measures for the prevention of floods. The subject has been often mentioned in these columns; and many of our readers are aware that in consequence of improved drainage all over the country, floods are much more sudden and destructive than formerly, and that in some river-valleys, continued neglect of prevention would be ruinous.

The Honourable Ralph Abercromby in discussing the application of what is known to mathematicians as 'harmonic analysis' to the reduction of meteorological observations, points out that the taking of averages in order to deduce results from series of observations is likely to mislead.

On the other hand, meteorology would not have been what it is had the process of averaging not been brought into use; it enables us to institute comparisons and to enlarge our experience. For example, 'the mean temperatures of the year or month, though giving a very small idea of the real climate, have been grouped to form isothermal maps, which have been of considerable value to meteorology. Again, by taking the mean direction of the wind at different parts of the earth, sailing-routes have been greatly improved; while by collecting rainfall statistics, much useful information has been derived, both as to the distribution of rain and the capabilities of local water-supply.'

Sir Ralph describes *weather* as 'the product of the passage of cyclones or anti-cyclones over any place. In temperate regions, the circulation of the atmosphere, the general scheme of which is at present entirely unknown, always takes broadly the form of cyclones or anti-cyclones, whose position and shape are in a state of perpetual change; subject to numerous local, diurnal, seasonal, and other variations, the weather at any part of either always possesses the same character; so that the weather over any area, at any instant, is the result of their position; and the sequence of weather, over any spot, is the result of their motion.'

Professed and amateur meteorologists will perhaps take note of these propositions; and if they will remember that 'deductions from averages give the facts only, and not the causes of any

periodic phenomena,' they may do much towards imparting a scientific character to meteorology.

Eleven European countries, and India, Mauritius, and the United States, now co-operate in the important work of Maritime Meteorology. In a contribution to his Report, the Hydrographer of the Admiralty says that at the present time 'there is scarcely a part of the globe visited by seamen unknown as to its prevalent seasons, winds, ranges of temperature, action of the barometer, and direction and velocity of the tides or currents.' But much more must be done before we know enough, or as much as will enable the mariner 'to know when to find a fair wind, and where to fall in with a favourable current.' How much more may be judged of from the fact that there are on the shelves at the Admiralty an accumulation 'of thousands on thousands of observations in most of the branches of ocean meteorology, and extending over the whole navigable surface of the globe, awaiting some organised system of reduction,' such as would satisfy the present requirements of science.

It is satisfactory to learn from the anniversary address of Mr Ellery, President of the Royal Society of Victoria, Australia, that legislative measures have been taken to check the 'reckless destruction' of timber in the forests of that colony, where rival owners of saw-mills have chopped down trees out of spite, and then left them to rot. The Department of Agriculture, supported by the new laws, has begun to reafforest the stripped mountain-sides with exotic as well as indigenous trees, whereby the state nurseries at Mount Macedon are making 'wonderful progress,' and a valuable growth now covers a large part of the summit. From these nurseries thousands of plants are distributed to other parts of the colony; and it is remarkable that many of the European and American timber trees thrive better than the native, and grow more rapidly than in their original habitat. 'It is intended also,' says Mr Ellery, 'to sow many of our wrecked forest areas broadcast with the seeds of indigenous trees, notably the ironbark, and the same process will be tried on some of the treeless plains to the north.' With a view to proper protection of the young plantations, a beginning has been made in the establishment of a college where young men will be trained in woodcraft and forestry and in agricultural chemistry. By these praiseworthy means it is hoped that the climate of the colony will be ameliorated, and the ever-increasing tendency towards drought—which is the invariable accompaniment of a treeless district—arrested. We trust that the example thus set will be followed in other parts of the world where timber is regarded only as material for money-making. The young state of Nebraska (U.S.) is planting trees by thousands; and we hear that among projected ameliorations in Cyprus, planting holds a prominent place.

In a communication to the Linnean Society, Mr J. C. Hawckshaw describes the grazing habits of the common limpet, as seen on that coating of delicate sea-weed which abounds on the chalky coast of Kent. In eating the weed, the limpets remove also a thin layer of chalk; and the white patches which they leave shew that a single limpet will clear more than an inch square in area in a single tide. First a small groove is made in the chalk,

and by repetition of the process, is gradually widened; and if the limpet should be excursive, becomes a zigzag more than a foot in length. From observation, Mr Hawckshaw calculates that ten limpets would keep clear a square (superficial) foot of chalk; and he remarks that 'in any case they do more to destroy the rock-surface than the sea ordinarily does.' The eastern beach at Dover is a favourable locality for observing that limpets not only graze, but that in some instances they dig pits. Beyond the Atlantic there are, as is said, limpets a foot in diameter. 'If,' remarks Mr Hawckshaw, 'the proceedings of these South American giants are at all the same as those of the limpets of our own shores, and are in proportion to their size, they must materially aid in the encroachment of the sea on the land when the rock happens to be soft.'

Another communication made to the same Society ought not to be passed without notice, for it is one in which human-kind, to say nothing of certain quadrupeds, are interested: it is 'On the Development of *Filaria sanguinis hominis*, and on the Mosquito considered as a Nurse.' Microscopists have discovered in human blood and in the blood of dogs, swarms of small thread-like worms—these are the *Filaria*. If they could grow and breed in the body in which they first appear, that body would soon die. 'If, for example, the brood of embryo *Filaria* at any one time free in the blood of a dog moderately well charged with them, were to begin growing before they had each attained a hundredth part of the size of the mature *Filaria*, their aggregate volume would occupy a bulk many times greater than the dog itself.' 'I have calculated,' says Mr Manson, author of the paper in question, 'that in the blood of certain dogs and men there exist at any given moment more than two millions of embryos.' Obviously this minute creature is a very formidable parasite. Were it not that large numbers disintegrate and perish, or are voided with the secretions, having even been found in the tears, the natural function of the blood would be impossible.

Nature requires that for further development the *Filaria* as well as other parasites should enter some other body. Knowing that mosquitoes suck human blood, Mr Manson made arrangements by which he captured a number of the insects which had gorged themselves on the blood of a filarious Chinaman who had been 'persuaded' to sleep in a mosquito chamber. On examining the insects by aid of the microscope, the subsequent development of the *Filaria* could be well made out: it passes through three stages, in the last of which 'it becomes endowed with marvellous power and activity. It rushes about the field (of the microscope), forcing obstacles aside, moving indifferently at either end, and appears quite at home.' Referring to the papillæ which, appearing at one extremity of the creature, are supposed to be the boring apparatus, Mr Manson says: 'This formidable-looking animal is undoubtedly the *Filaria sanguinis hominis* equipped for independent life, and ready to quit its nurse the mosquito.' And concerning the subsequent history of the creature he remarks, that the *Filaria* 'escaping into the water in which the mosquito died is, through the medium of this fluid, brought into contact with the tissues of man, and that, either piercing the

integuments or what is more probable, being swallowed, it works its way through the alimentary canal to its final resting-place. Arrived there, its development is perfected, fecundation is effected, and finally the embryo *Filaria* we meet with in the blood are discharged in successive swarms and in countless numbers. In this way the genetic cycle is completed.

It is in warm climates that the presence of these microscopic worms is most to be feared. In Brazil, Demerara, India, China, and other tropical countries the existence of the *Filaria* has been but too clearly made out, and that its presence is associated with painful and disgusting diseases, and 'not improbably with leprosy itself.' It is found too in Natal in company with a noxious parasite of another kind. If, as is thought, there is some relation between the infested blood and certain epidemics, the question is one well deserving of careful study.

Inventions for use in war and destruction of life have been numerous of late years. Commander Gilmore, R.N., has thought it right to advocate the other side of the question in a paper read at the United Service Institution on 'The best Method of carrying Life-saving Apparatus on Board our Men-of-war,' in which he shewed that with iron ships, rams, new explosives, and torpedoes, the naval battles of the future will be more destructive than those of the past. When a wooden ship sank, many floating fragments remained to which men could cling until picked up by boats; but the wounded iron ship goes swiftly to the bottom with all hands. Against such terrible loss there is, as Commander Gilmore contends, no resource so readily available and trustworthy as a raft. After examination, he finds that ships could carry rafts without materially interfering with their efficiency, and proposes 'that vessels possessing poops and forecastles should have rafts on the top of them, constructed of air-tight cells or of cork compartments, forming flying poops and forecastles.' In many cases the captain's bridge might be constructed as a raft ready to be launched at any moment.

In the discussion on this paper it was shewn that cork mattresses and waterproof hammocks afford a ready means of saving life in cases of emergency; and that small boats and floats to fold up might be made of strips of pine. By the insertion of tubes in, or attaching them to the strips, their buoyancy would be largely increased; and if all the wooden movables on board ship were bored and stuffed, so to speak, with tubes, the chance for crew and passengers to keep themselves afloat would not be so narrow as it now is. The Society of Arts will perhaps have something to say on this subject, for in the spring of last year they offered their gold medal for 'the best means of saving life at sea, when a vessel has to be abandoned suddenly, say with five minutes' warning only.'

The experiments with the electric light continue: on the Thames Embankment, the Holborn Viaduct, and in other places, and are generally successful; but some time must elapse before complete economy of power on one hand and perfection of light on the other are arrived at. Amongst the best, one has been shewn at the north end of the Quadrant in Regent Street, where the prevailing dimness has been transformed into what

may be described as brilliant moonlight, under which it was not more difficult to cross amid the throng of vehicles than by daylight. On all sides there are indications that the experiments will not be given up: Mr Siemens is pursuing his investigations; Dr Tyndall has given a lecture on the subject at the Royal Institution; and Mr Wilde of Manchester, who exhibited a remarkably powerful dynamo-electric machine at a gathering of the Royal Society twelve years ago, and made experiments which were described in their *Proceedings*, has now brought out an electric lamp which has claims to notice. The source of the light is an electro-magnetic induction machine, driven by a steam-engine; and the light itself is produced by a pair of carbon-rods about seven inches in length, one of which, by an ingenious self-acting contrivance, is made to touch the other at its upper end, or to revert to its original perpendicular as required. During the contact, no current passes; but on separation, the current is produced and the light appears. A number of pairs of carbons may be lighted at once; and it is an advantage that they do not all cease to burn should anything go wrong with one of the number.

Mr Wilde will persevere with his investigations. In the experiments above referred to, he established the fact, that a large amount of magnetism can be developed in an electro-magnet by means of a permanent magnet of much smaller power; and then exciting a large electro-magnet by means of a small magneto-electric machine, he succeeded in evolving a proportionately large amount of dynamic electricity. Driven by a steam-engine, the movable parts made fifteen hundred revolutions per minute; and the current produced was so exceedingly powerful that iron rods fifteen inches long and a quarter of an inch thick, and seven-feet lengths of No. 16 iron wire, were at once melted. The illuminating power of the electricity thus developed was, according to the description, of the most splendid kind. 'When an electric lamp, furnished with rods of gas-carbon half an inch square, was placed at the top of a lofty building, the light evolved was sufficient to cast shadows from the flames of the street lamps a quarter of a mile distant.' And a piece of ordinary sensitised paper such as is used by photographers, when exposed to the action of the light for twenty seconds, at two feet from the reflector, was darkened to the same degree as was a piece of the same paper exposed for one minute to the direct rays of the sun at noon on a bright day in March.

Of potentiality of electric light there is evidently no lack. The question now is to apply it simply and efficiently. Considering that many inventors in different parts of the world are doing their best to solve it, we may believe that the days of electric lighting are not very far off. We may again ere long refer to this subject.

In last *Month* it is stated that of the 114 millions of tons of coal, estimated to be annually consumed in Great Britain, more than a third escapes into the air in the shape of oil of vitriol. This is a mistake: the estimated amount of oil of vitriol liberated, being 1 per cent., or about 3,500,000 tons.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.



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